

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, December 30, 1891, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Beinn Bhreagh, C. B., Wed., Dec. 30, 1891. JOURNAL Dear Mabel:

Not much to note today I am afraid. The news from the mountain continues good. "The cry is still they come." Mr. Ellis has been hard at work today upon a new boiler for the flying machine — for if we are successful in obtaining good rotation and lifting power it may be important to obtain it tomorrow. Next day would throw us into another year ! Would like to be able to say we obtained the result in 1891.

This will be rushed to completion tomorrow morning. Mr. McInnis took dinner with us — and we devoted afternoon to looking over plans of the place.

Instructed him to have all the young trees and bushes taken out of the mountain clearings so as to preserve the pasture — but not to touch the larger trees without specific instructions.

The land below the Manager's cottage — to right and left — very wet and scampy — to be drained — and the drains to be so arranged as to run into the pond near the warehouse to increase flow of water there. All muck for compost heaps to be taken out of same pond so as to enlarge it and deepen it — with the view of converting it into a boat harbor when we come to build at the point.

Mr. McInnis wants to know what to do with vast quantities of stones he wants to remove. Use them for drains and gutters of roads — and dump the surplus at the point (d) on beach outside pond. This will cause beach to form to (d) right and help harbor. Stop up the artificial outlet (a) and open the natural outlet (c) Part in dotted lines is a depression

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containing pools and water etc., Muck for compost to be taken between (b) and (c)
Drainage of land led into pond

(b) and (c) will increase the flow of water and help to make the harbor.

Mr. McInnis and Mr. Campbell are to come here tomorrow afternoon and talk over farming operations.

Been much interested in reading reports of Experimental Farms in Canada — (blue book)

Volta Bureau has just issued "The Helen Keller Souvenir" — a beautifully printed affair containing fac-simile copies of two of Helen Keller's letters.

Maggie's cousin in Baddeck is dead — She went in this evening to attend the wake. Mr. McCurdy also went in to take another lesson in developing photographs.

John McAuley came for them and reported water very rough on other side — and storm blowing from the south east. Felt no wind here and water looked smooth. When they had gone about two-thirds of distance they began to feel the wind. The largest wave Mr. McCurdy ever saw came after the boat. Lifted stern high in the air — and though Mr. McCurdy and John McAuley pulled their very best — wave dashed over stern and delayed Maggie.

Mr. McCurdy and Maggie had hard work in getting out of the boat. Mr. McCurdy could not land at pier — and had to face the waves and get clear of the wharf for fear of dashing the boat to pieces. He then ran her on shore and pulled her up. Wind increased to such an extent that Mr. McCurdy and Maggie had to drive home round the bay. Mr. McAuley drove into town for them. Wind nearly overturned the carriage. Two wheels lifted clear off the ground — and but for John McAuley's prompt action in shifting his seat so as to weight that side down — whole thing would have gone over. 3 Mr. McCurdy says he has never known of such a powerful wind. We are sheltered here by the mountain. As it started in the

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southeast — it will probably veer to the east — then become northeast — and finally north. If so we will not feel it here until it gets near the north — when storm will be passing off. Am inclined to think we are right in the path of the storm — or perhaps a little north of the center.

Can hear the wind howling over the mountain — but we hardly feel it here — as yet !

Mr. McCurdy thinks that the vessels at the wharves in Baddeck will be injured or sunk by pounding against the wharves. Great excitement in town about it. The Harlow is there and Mr. McCurdy thinks she will certainly be injured unless she anchors under the lee of the island. When he left Baddeck she was pounding the wharf badly.

I have been going on with sheep notes and diagrams this evening. Want to get all my notes of last year's work in order — and write an account of it for preservation in sheep book — before I leave here.

No. letter from you yet. We sail in the Werra on January 23rd, 1892 — for Genoa. House has been very lonely without you all. Have missed Elsie and Daisy so much — that I have asked Mr. McCurdy whether we can't have one of his children here for company. George came here this morning — with his beautiful hair cut short! Shame isn't it. Haven't cut my beard yet! — It will be a yard long I expect by the time you see it. Get your scissors ready for the occasion.

George and I had a nice little talk after supper. He devoured one giant imagination story after another till bed time came. He is to come to me tomorrow for a mountain-top — and my celebrated story of the India-rubber Nan! Love to Elsie and Daisy and a heartfelt to yourself.

Your loving husband, Alec.